

### REMARKS

Responsive to the outstanding Office Action, applicant has carefully studied the Examiner's rejections and the comments relative thereto. A one month request for extension of time is being submitted herewith.

Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in light of the amendments and following detailed arguments.

In this response, claims 1, 6 and 10 have been amended, and claims 3, 4, 8 and 9 have been canceled. Claim 1, as amended, combines subject matter from previously pending claims 1 and 8, and further more precisely defines what the recess is like and where the sealing film is provided according to what can be seen in the figures of the present application. The amended claim 10 is supported by the previous claims 8 and 10. It is therefore respectfully submitted that no new matter has been presented in any of these amendments.

### IN THE DRAWINGS

The Examiner indicated that the drawings were objected to as failing to show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Specifically, the drawings failed to show the support part having curves in the edge region of the recess.

In response thereto, the claims have been amended in such a manner as to remove references to the curved regions. It is therefore believed that the figures now show the remaining claimed features.

In view of the above, reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the drawings is respectfully requested.

### CLAIMS OBJECTIONS

The Examiner noted several informalities in the claims that were objected to. In response, claim 1 was amended to change "support" to "support part", claims 6 and 10 were amended to remove references to "on one hand" and "on the other hand", and claim 10 was amended to remove the extra space before the comma. It is therefore believed that all of these informalities have been corrected, and withdrawal of the rejections is therefore respectfully requested.

### REJECTION UNDER 35 USC §112

Claim 3 was rejected under 35 USC §112, first paragraph for failing to comply with the enablement requirement. Claims 9 and 10 were rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph for being indefinite for failing to point out and distinctly claim the subject matter applicant regards as the invention.

In response thereto, claims 3 and 9 have been canceled herein. Claim 10 has been amended herein to (1) correctly change "the carrier part" to "the support part" and has further been amended to clarify how the rear foaming bonds. It is respectfully submitted that these claims are now clear and that this rejection has thus been overcome.

## REJECTION UNDER 35 USC §103

Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 USC §103 as being unpatentable over the combined teachings of Batchelder in view of Anglsperger and Phillion. Claim 9 was rejected over Batchelder in view of Anglsperger and Phillion and further in view of Saslecov. Claims 1-5, 8 and 10 were rejected under 35 USC §103 as being unpatentable over Phillion in view of Anglsperger, and claim 9 was rejected under 35 USC §103 as being unpatentable over Phillion in view of Anglsperger and further in view of Saslecov.

Before discussing the prior art, applicant wishes to point out the features of the present invention as claimed in independent claims 1. Claim 1 defines an interior panelling part for automotive vehicles, having at least one weak point for forming an opening for the passage of an airbag, having a support part and a pattern on the visible side, which pattern is applied on the support part. The support part has a recess forming an aperture in the region of the opening, which recess is bridged at least partially by a flap part made of a softer material than the support part. The pattern on the side orientated towards the support part is rear-foamed, the flap part is part of the rear-foaming, and the rear-foaming has a harder foam in the region of the recess than in the remaining regions of the rear-foaming. In the region of the recess, a sealing film bridging the recess and associated with the rear-foaming on a back side of the rear-foaming which is orientated towards the support part is provided such that the aperture formed by the recess is closed by the sealing film.

It is respectfully submitted that the primary reference applied by the Examiner US 5,072,968 (Batchelder et al) does not disclose the limitations of the present claim 1.

Specifically, it does not disclose that the pattern on the side orientated towards the support part is rear-foamed, that the rear-foaming has a harder foam in the regions of the recess than in the remaining regions, and that, in the region of the recess, a sealing film bridging the recess and associated with the rear foaming on a back side of the rear-foaming which is orientated towards the support part is provided such that the aperture formed by the recess is closed by the sealing film.

The secondary reference US 5,590,903 (Phillion et al) fails to overcome these deficiencies of the primary reference. One skilled in the art will not find any teaching to provide, in the region of the recess, a sealing film bridging the recess and associated with the rear foaming on a back side of the rear— foaming which is orientated towards the support part is provided such that the aperture formed by the recess is closed by the sealing film. In fact, neither of these documents even disclose the feature of a rear-foamed pattern, therefore it cannot be obvious to provide such a sealing film which has the function to ensure that no soft foam passes through the airbag recess.

The secondary reference US 6,443,484 B2 (Anglsperger) shows a very different interior paneling. This reference also fails to disclose the missing feature of a sealing film bridging the recess and associated with the rear foaming on a back side of the rear-foaming such that the aperture formed by the recess is closed by the sealing. Thus, no combination of this reference with Phillion and Batchelder shows the present invention as claimed in claim 1.

When the document by Phillion et al is taken as the starting point, it is even less obvious to provide a sealing film according to the present claim 1. Phillion et al do not even show the feature of a recess forming an aperture in the support part. Therefore,

even when the intermediate layer in an assembly according to the state of the art shown by Phillion et al was produced by rear-foaming, there would not be any need for avoiding that the foam, before being hardened, passes through the support part. Therefore, one skilled in the art would not be motivated to combine the references as suggested.

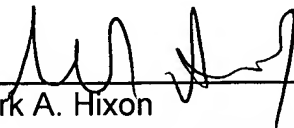
Again, Anglsperger shows a very different interior paneling. It does not disclose the missing feature of a sealing film bridging the recess and associated with the rear foaming on a back side of the rear-foaming such that the aperture formed by the recess is closed by the sealing.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that no reasonable combination of the applied references discloses the invention as claimed in claim 1. Specifically, there is no teaching or suggestion to provide a sealing film bridging the recess and associated with the rear foaming on a back side of the rear-foaming such that the aperture formed by the recess is closed by the sealing film can be found in the cited documents. Therefore, the present invention, as claimed in claim 1, is both new, and non-obvious. The rejections thereagainst should therefore be withdrawn.

Based on the above, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is allowable over the applied art of record. Claims 2, 5-7 and 10, which depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 are believed to be allowable based, at least, upon this dependence. Therefore, all of the claims are believed to be allowable, and action towards that end is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner wish to modify any of the language of the claims, applicants' attorney suggests a telephone interview in order to expedite the prosecution of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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